Working and Paying for Health Care

This fact sheet covers:

- **Medicaid and Medicare**

- **Working and health care benefits**

- **M.E.D. Works**—a Medicaid "buy-in" program for people with disabilities who work

- **Employer-sponsored health insurance**

Great news! If you are worried about going to work and losing your health care coverage, some Social Security work incentives may help put your mind at ease.

Work incentives are programs from the Social Security Administration that provide additional supports to many people with disabilities who are working. Programs vary depending on whether you are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Extended Period of Medicare Coverage (SSDI)

If you have Medicare (health care insurance provided to people who have received SSDI for at least 24 months) and you go to work, you will be able to keep your Medicare coverage for at least 93 months after you've completed your Trial Work Period. (For more information on Trial Work Period, see the fact sheet "Social Security Disability Insurance.") That's more than seven years, regardless of how much money you earn. When your Medicare ends is based on when you work your way off cash benefits, but even after the Extended Period of Medicare Coverage, you may still have the option of purchasing Medicare.

Section 1619(b) and Medicaid Coverage (SSI)

In Indiana, Medicaid coverage is connected to SSI. If you have SSI and Medicaid at least one month before you start working, your Medicaid coverage is protected by a Social Security rule known as

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1619(b). This provision means that you can keep your Medicaid coverage even after your earnings increase to the "Break-Even Point," when you no longer receive an SSI check. When that happens—as long as you earn under a specific amount: $32,397 per year in 2021—you will have 12 months when you may still be eligible for Medicaid even if you're no longer receiving an SSI check.

M.E.D. Works (SSDI)

If you are receiving SSDI and/or do not receive SSI, you may qualify for M.E.D. Works, the Medicaid buy-in program in Indiana for people with disabilities who work. M.E.D. Works allows you to keep your Medicaid (full coverage, including Home and Community-Based Medicaid waiver services) when you begin working. You may pay a monthly premium, which is based on your monthly income. With M.E.D. Works, you can also save for retirement in an approved account (such as a 401k through your employer), and it won't count against your Medicaid resource limit!

Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance (SSI & SSDI)

Some businesses offer health insurance to their employees. You can take this insurance (there is usually a monthly premium) and still keep your Medicaid and/or Medicare. Some people choose to do this so that their family members who do not have a disability (your spouse and children) will have health insurance. Whatever you pay in premiums for this will decrease the amount you have to pay for M.E.D. Works. Here's an example:

$100	Amount of premium you need to pay for M.E.D. Works
—$100	Payroll deducted amount you pay for your employer's health insurance premium
$0	New M.E.D. Works premium

So, in this example, you would not need to pay anything for M.E.D. Works, but because you're paying a health care premium at work, you'll be covered through your employer-sponsored plan *and* through M.E.D. Works.

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See also the "Need Help with Medical Expenses?" section of the "Supplemental Security Income After Age 18" fact sheet in this series. There you'll find information about Impairment-Related Work Expenses or Blind Work Expenses, which are special work incentive programs established by Social Security to help workers pay for health expenses that may not be covered by Medicaid or their employer's insurance.

Social Security Administration

1-800-772-1213

www.ssa.gov

The Social Security Red Book

http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/